

SOCIAL MEDIA - HOW IT CAN HELP GET THE MESSAGE OUT.

Recently we read where a marketing expert pointed out that research has shown that just when a TV/radio/billboard advertisement starts to get irritating is when it actually starts to work, so just because you used some form of Social Media - Facebook, Youtube etc. - and didn't immediately get a crowd of people clamoring to come square dancing, doesn't mean that your message isn't getting out and **creating awareness.**

“Technology and social networking sites are like word of mouth on steroids. An individual can inform masses with the click of a button.”

FACEBOOK

The city of Williams Lake has two Facebook pages. One is **“Positively Williams Lake”** where only positive messages can be sent. (What great dance we had last night...) This means that the 800 or so people who follow this Facebook page are positive kinds of people. Your message has reached these 800 people instantly.

The other page is **“Thank You Williams Lake”** where messages of thanks are sent out (“Thanks WL square dancers for a great dance weekend....”) If you are creative with your message you can let people know what great fun, exercise, etc etc SD is.

Check to see if your town or city has a similar Facebook page. Think of it as free advertising for Square Dancing and your club.

The Williams Lake Stampede Whirlaways are constantly looking for new ways to market square dancing. Recently Mary Anne Turner created a **Facebook Fan Page** for the club. This is different from the usual Facebook page. No one has to send a friend request in order to be able to see the page. They don't need to be a member of anything. All the postings are open to the public. Anyone and everyone can read what is posted there even if they don't have a Facebook page of their own.

There are so far, 42 likes who are notified of an entry. But there may be over 200-500 views as the 42 forward to family, friends etc.

First, the person who **creates** this page for your club must have a regular Facebook page of their own before they can create the new page. It is not difficult, there are many instructions available on the Internet. Be sure to learn how to use the settings, however, so that you can avoid having people write inappropriate comments on the page. Everything can be controlled by whoever is administering the page.

Second, with the agreement of your club members, you need to regularly post photos, posters, and information that might interest members of the public if they should happen across your page. Keep things interesting and positive.

Third, encourage club members to help you obtain ideas, photos, etc. to post on the page. Share the work.

The Whirlaways Club page is at

<https://www.facebook.com/williamslakesquaredancers>

Stop by and see what has been done. Clicking the Like button at the top of the page helps to make our page come up closer to the top of the list when people are looking for square dancing information in Williams Lake.

The club members have enjoyed using the page also. They often direct their friends or relatives to the page to see the photos and videos. If entries are made on a regular basis, it becomes like a memory book of your club activities.

It has been quite fascinating watching the activity on the page. One of the videos posted has been visited by 342 people and the Christmas photos have been viewed 354 times. Many of the visitors were from Williams Lake but many others were from out of town. The snow shoe square dancing has been viewed 634 times. It really is an interesting way to spread our square dance message.

It only takes one interested, enthusiastic, thoughtful member of your club to spread the word this way and with multiple members sharing, the message is exponential!

Find that one person!

It's not rocket science and it **is** today's world.

YOUTUBE

Do you wonder why younger people (20 -50 year olds) say, "I'm not old enough to Square Dance."?

If you watch Square Dancing on Youtube sites that's mostly all you see - really old people shuffling round - so if you post video on YouTube make sure you include younger dancers, smiling dancers, happy dancers. No broken down squares, no frowns of concentration, no one looking bored.

Portray SD as an activity for lively people.

Don't forget the privacy issue. Get permission to post